



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

The second paragraph of Section 104.2.1 of the Building Code states: "The building official shall have the power to render interpretations of this code and to adopt and enforce rules and supplemental regulations to clarify the application of its provisions. Such interpretations, rules and regulations shall be in conformance with the intent and purpose of this code."

In compliance with the intent of this section, documents referred to as "CODE WORDS" are published. The updated series of these documents herein will be referred to as "CODE WORD 97" and will supersede all previous CODE WORD documents.

The purpose of CODE WORDS is to provide a single source of written policies, procedures and information to aid in the successful administration of the Building Code and city ordinances and to promote consistent, uniform practices.

Additions to CODE WORD 97 are available on the Planning and Development web site located at: www.houstonplanning.com, or by calling (713) 651-CODE (2633).

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



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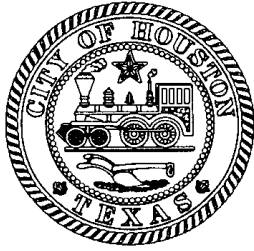
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CW NO: 97-102

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PUBLICATION: November 27, 2001

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Mezzanine exit

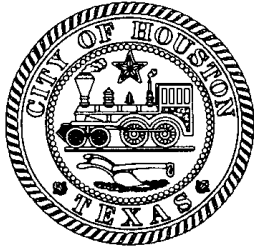
CODE: Building

SECTION: 507 & 1007.2.3

The number of exits required from a mezzanine shall be determined by Section 507 Item 5. Section 1007.2.3 applies to balconies in auditoriums. The conflict between the requirements of these section has been rectified in Section 1008.4 of the 2000 edition of the *International Building Code* ® and will be accepted as an alternate.

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PUBLICATION: November 8, 2001

SUBJECT: Alternate method-corridors in existing schools

CODE: Building- Appendix Chapter 34

SECTION: 3407.3

As an alternate to the requirement for rated corridors in existing schools, an automatic fire alarm system may be provided. The system shall consist of the following:

1. Smoke detectors in the exit corridors, common areas, offices and classrooms.
2. Manual pull-boxes by all exits from each floor of the building.
3. Automatic detectors (heat or smoke) in mechanical rooms, storage rooms and similar areas.

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CW NO: 97-100

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PUBLICATION: October 19, 2001

SUBJECT: Ordinance Change

CODE: Electrical

SECTION: 402.2, 407.2, 416, & 507.1

An ordinance was passed on August 22, 2001 amending the City of Houston Electrical Code. The sections below shall read as follows:

1. SECTION 402.2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"402.2 Duration of License. Any license issued under this code to a licensee born in an odd-numbered year shall expire on date of birth in the odd-numbered year following the date of issuance or renewal. Any license issued under this Code to a licensee born in an even-numbered year shall expire on date of birth in the even-numbered year following the date of issuance or renewal. Renewal of any license that has lapsed for a period of not more than six months may be obtained only upon payment of a fee equal to double the regular renewal fee. Any renewal after a six-month lapse may be made only after reexamination, provided that the Electrical Board may extend such period upon written request of the applicant and a showing by the applicant that the failure to timely renew the license was caused by extreme personal hardship conditions that prevented the applicant from timely renewing."

2. SECTION 407.2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"407.2 Experience. To apply for a license, an applicant must have either:

1. A Certificate of Completion from an apprenticeship program approved by the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training for the occupation of electrician; or

2. A certificate evidencing having received no less than 100 hours of classroom instruction in electrical work from a program approved by the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training for the occupation of electrician, plus evidence of having completed at least 60 months' active and practical experience in construction electrical work. For the purpose of this requirement, a degree or diploma in electrical engineering or electrical technology from an accredited university or college shall be considered as the equivalent of 48 months'

3. SECTION 416 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"SECTION 416 - ANNUAL LICENSE FEES

To obtain or renew a license, an applicant shall pay the applicable license fee as follows:

TYPE	EXAMINATION	LICENSE	RENEWAL	DUPLICATE
Electrical Contractor	N/A	\$150	\$150	\$5
Master Electrician	\$50	\$150	\$150	\$5
Line Master Electrician	\$50	\$150	\$150	\$5
Sign Master Electrician	\$50	\$150	\$150	\$5
Maintenance Electrician	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$5
Journeyman Electrician	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$5
Journeyman Lineman	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$5
Sign Journeyman Electrician	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$5
Residential Journeyman	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$5
Apprentice Electrician	N/A	\$20	\$20	\$5
Apprentice Lineman	N/A	\$20	\$20	\$5
Sign Apprentice Electrician	N/A	\$20	\$20	\$5
Apprentice Maintenance Electrician	N/A	\$20	\$20	\$5

All fees shall be prorated for each month the license is in effect based on a 24 month period.

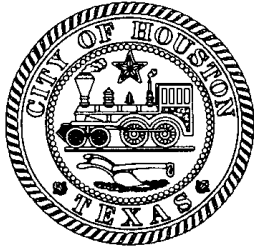
An administrative fee of \$5.00 shall be charged upon the preparation of each fee or deposit receipt issued by the building official. This fee shall apply regardless of whether the fee or deposit is payable pursuant to this code or the City Code. This fee shall be in addition to all other applicable fees or deposits. When paid for a deposit or fee receipt, this fee shall neither constitute nor be refundable as a part of the deposit."

4. SECTION 507.1 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"507.1 General. Nonmetallic sheathed cable shall be used only for temporary work or in single-family or multifamily residential dwellings of four stories or less and Group U Occupancies. Nonmetallic sheathed cable shall be limited to four stories of habitable space not including a parking garage or limited to three stories of habitable space above a single story parking garage but in no case shall the wiring method exceed four stories. In buildings, nonmetallic sheathed cable and armored cable shall be run through holes bored in joist, except in that portion of the attic where that vertical clearance is less than 36 inches (914 mm) or where the cables are secured to guard strips 1 inch (25.4 mm) high. If there is less than 36 inches (914 mm) at the highest part of the attic area, there shall be left a portion of the attic at least 42 inches (1067 mm) wide, free from any cable on top of joist for the access of crawl space."

Melvin L. Embry
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INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

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PUBLICATION: October 19, 2001

SUBJECT: Ordinance Change

CODE: Building

SECTION: 110.2.1, 110.2.3, 221, & 3008

An ordinance was passed on August 22, 2001 and becomes effective as of October 21, 2001 amending the City of Houston Building Code- General Provisions Volume. The sections below shall read as follows:

1. THE LAST LINE OF SECTION 110.2.1, WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS:

"Duplicate job card \$ 30.00"

IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"Duplicate job card \$ 20.00"

2. SECTION 110.2.3 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"110.2.3 Occupancy and inspection. The following permit fees apply to occupancy and inspection of existing buildings:

1. A Certificate of Occupancy or a Life-safety compliance inspection and certificates (for compliance with Appendix Chapter 34, Division 1; includes initial compliance inspection, final inspection and issuance of certificate; does not include fees for permits where work is required):

First story \$300.00

Each additional story \$100.00

For residential multifamily buildings per contiguous project:

For one to thirty units \$300.00

Each additional units \$10.00

2. Duplicate life-safety compliance certificate \$ 35.00
3. Certificate name change only \$ 50.00
4. Duplicate Certificate of Occupancy \$ 35.00
5. Incinerator inspection \$ 35.00
6. Revalidation inspection \$ 25.00
7. Change of address request \$ 50.00
8. Certificate of compliance-inspection for resale of existing house when such inspection has been requested by the owner \$ 50.00
9. Certificates for individual retail or office spaces of less than 3,000 square feet in multi-tenant buildings \$35.00
(This fee is in additional to any fee required for a Life-Safety Certificate of Compliance for the building core)
10. Individual one story retail or office buildings or spaces of less than 3,000 square feet \$125.00"

3. SECTION 221 – T IS AMENDED BY ADDING, IN THE APPROPRIATE ALPHABETICAL POSITION, THE FOLLOWING DEFINITION:

"TRANSIT SHED is a covered structure erected on a wharf or quay for the temporary storage of goods in transit between ship and land carriers or warehouse."

4. TABLE 5-B IS AMENDED BY ADDING FOOTNOTE 11 TO ITEM S-1 IN THE FOURTH ROW AND TO ITEM S-2 IN THE SIXTH ROW OF THE FIRST COLUMN, LABELED *USE GROUP*, TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"¹¹ The area of a Type II-N building meeting the definition of a 'transit shed' may be increased to 250,000 square feet, provided there is no other building located closer than 200 feet to the building and there is a paved access road at least 60 feet in width on all sides of the building."

5. A NEW SECTION 3008 IS ADDED, TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

"SECTION 3008 — ESCALATOR SKIRT DEFLECTOR DEVICES

3008.1 Purpose. The purpose of this Section is to improve the overall safety of escalators located within the jurisdiction by establishing provisions for the installation of escalator skirt deflector devices on new and existing escalators.

3008.2 Definitions.

ESCALATOR SKIRT DEFLECTOR DEVICE shall mean a device which reduces the risk of objects coming into contact with the skirt.

INSTALLATION DATE, for the purposes of this section only, shall be date the permit was obtained for installation.

3008.3 Compliance Program. All escalators installed after October 21, 2001 shall be equipped with escalator skirt deflector devices or equivalent protection in accordance with the ASME A17.1 Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators. The owners of existing buildings in which one or more escalators were installed prior to October 21, 2001 shall have skirt deflector devices or equivalent protective equipment installed on all escalators by no later than January 1, 2011.

3008.4 Approval. The building official shall have the authority to adopt and enforce rules and regulations to administer approval of the design, construction, configuration and installation of skirt deflector devices for use in this jurisdiction. The building official shall promulgate such rules and regulations.

3008.5 Technical Requirements. Escalator skirt deflector devices shall be installed in accordance with the deflector device manufacturer's recommended installation instructions, and the ASME A17.1 Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators."

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CITY OF HOUSTON

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CW NO: 97-98

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PUBLICATION: July 18, 2001

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Omission of sprinklers in electrical rooms

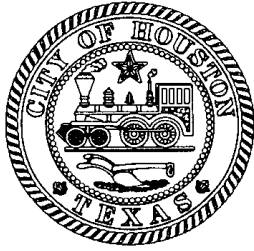
CODE: Building

SECTION: 904.4

Sprinklers may be omitted in electrical equipment rooms that comply with the requirements in the exceptions to Section 4-13.10 of the 1996 edition of NFPA 13.

Melvin L. Embry
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PUBLICATION: April 25, 2001

SUBJECT: Horizontal exits

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1002

The following definition for horizontal exits shall be used;

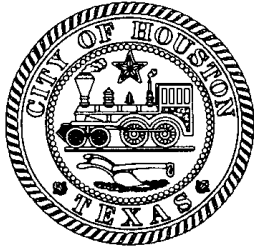
“HORIZONTAL EXIT is an exit from one building into another building on approximately the same level, or through or around a wall constructed as required for a two-hour occupancy separation and which completely divides a floor into two or more separate areas so as to establish an area of refuge affording safety from fire or smoke coming from the area from which escape is made.”

This definition is the same as was printed in the previous codes and that was left out of the 97 edition and it is also similar to what is now printed in the 2000 International Building Code.

Melvin L. Embry
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_____ G Bridges
_____ A Largent
_____ S Blake
_____ N Dham

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CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

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CW NO: 97-96

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PUBLICATION: April 5, 2001

SUBJECT: Interpretation-Tower installations

CODE: Building

SECTION: 106. 2 Item #12

The exemption in this section from the requirement to obtain a building permit to construct a tower under 75' in height shall apply only to the following:

- (1) Tower structures used primarily for the support of amateur and citizens' band radio or private television antennae;
- (2) Tower structures on real property owned, leased, held or used, or dedicated for use by a public utility for rendering its service, such as tower structures used primarily for the transmission of electrical power by a public utility or the conveyance of communications over a telephone wire-line system operated by a public utility;
- (3) High mast tower structures or antennas built on land on, along or adjacent to streets, roads, highways and bridges maintained by the state or a political subdivision of the state; and
- (4) Tower structures constructed or placed on land or other structures owned, leased, held or dedicated for use by the state or federal government or any political subdivision thereof, which land or other structures are used by the governmental entity primarily for rendering fire, police or other public protection services or utility services, whether or not the tower structure is used jointly by the governmental entity and any other public or private person or entity for other and additional public or private purposes.

A building permit for any tower structure that is 60' or more in height and does not meet these exemptions shall not be issued unless a special permit has been obtained pursuant to Section 41-51 of the City Code of Ordinances.

Melvin L. Embry
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CITY OF HOUSTON

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CW NO: 97-95

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PUBLICATION: March 19, 2001

SUBJECT: Door closures on corridor doors

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1004.3.4.3.2.1

As an alternate, door closures will not be required on corridor doors to electrical closets, janitorial closets, telephone and mechanical rooms which are kept closed and locked and not accessible to the public.

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CW NO: 97-94

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PUBLICATION: January 19, 2001

SUBJECT: POLICY - Gas Test Gauges

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 1204.3.2

In lieu of the mercury gauge required in this section one of the following may be used:

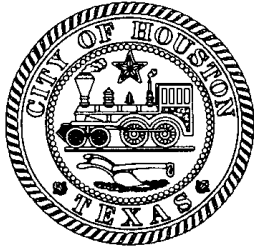
1. Low Pressure Systems -A low pressure diaphragm gauge with a minimum dial size of three and one half inches with a set hand and a pressure range not to exceed six (6) P.S.I. with 1/10 pound incrementation. The minimum test pressure shall not be less than three (3) P.S.I. and the maximum test pressure to be applied shall not exceed four (4) P.S.I.

2. Medium Pressure Systems- A diaphragm type pressure gauge with a minimum dial size of 3 and one half inches with a set hand and a pressure range not to exceed twenty (20) P.S.I. with 2/10 pound incrementation. The minimum test pressure shall not be less than ten (10) P.S.I. and the maximum test pressure shall not exceed twelve (12) P.S.I.

3. High Pressure Systems- Gauges specified in Section 318 shall be used for high pressure systems and with a pressure of not less than twice the pressure the system will be subjected to when in service.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

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PUBLICATION: February 28, 2000

SUBJECT: Hazardous materials storage canopies

CODE: Building and Fire

SECTION: 904.2.6 U.B.C 8003.1.14 U.F.C.

An automatic fire-extinguishing system will not be required for an open canopy that meets the requirements of Section 8003.1.14 of the Fire Code and is used for sheltering outdoor hazardous material unless the sprinkler system is required by the Fire Code for outdoor storage. The canopy will be classified in the appropriate H occupancy classification with the notation on the permit "Canopy for Hazard Material Storage." All such structures shall be routed to the Fire Department for approval.

Gary Bridges
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CW NO: 97-92

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PUBLICATION: March 15, 1999

SUBJECT: Substitute for coreboard material

CODE: Building

SECTION: Table 7-B, Item 12.1.1

In lieu of the requirement in item 12.1.1 in Table 7-B for one inch coreboard material, two layers of 5/8 inch Type X gypsum board laminated together with staggered joints may be substituted.

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CW NO: 97-91

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PUBLICATION: February 15, 1999

SUBJECT: Electrical disconnects

CODE: Mechanical

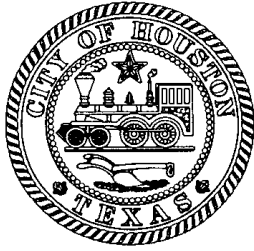
SECTION: 309.1

There exists a difference in electrical disconnect requirements for mechanical equipment between the National Electrical Code and the Uniform Plumbing Code.

As an alternate to the requirements of Section 309.1, the requirements of the National Electric Code shall be used and the Electrical Inspection Section shall be responsible for enforcement.

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CW NO: 97-90

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PUBLICATION: December 3, 1998

SUBJECT: R1 Conversions

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3405

The exception to Section 3405 of the code grants wide authority to the building official to use judgement in determining the level of safety and which code requirements will apply when a change of occupancy is proposed to an existing building. Reference is made in chapter 34 of the Houston Building Code to the Uniform Code for Building Conservation (UCBC) for determining the level of hazard. In order to provide consistency in the requirements, the attached guidelines have been developed to use when converting an existing building to an apartment or hotel. The minimum Appendix chapter 34 life-safety requirements shall apply whether existing or new. See the table on page 2.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf

R1 Conversions.....

Page 2 of 2

CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY - GROUP B TO GROUP R1

1. Sprinkler System	As required per current code.
2. Fire Alarm System	As required per current code.
3. Natural Light	Required but no minimum size is stated in the UCBC
4. Stair Enclosures	Rated enclosure is required but one stair may discharge through a street floor lobby.
5. Stair Rise and Run	Existing stairs do not have to be changed if they meet life-safety. New stairs must comply.
6. Stair Pressurization	As required per current code. However, if it can be determined that there are practical difficulties with the existing construction, an alternate will be considered by the Building Official.
7. Exterior Walls	May keep existing construction and openings.
8. Fire Department Central Control Station	As required per current code for high-rise buildings.
9. Smoke Control System	Not required unless required when constructed.
10. Corridors	As required per current code.
11. Type of Construction	As required per current code, except the rating on the structural frame, floor, or roof system can be reduced by one hour due to the sprinkler requirement.
12. Emergency Generator for High-Rise	As required per current code.
13. Vertical Openings	As required per current code.
14. Ventilation / Fresh Air	As required per current code.

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-89

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 15, 1998

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Fire alarm control wiring

CODE: Building

SECTION: 905.9.2

The requirement of this section shall apply only to wiring extending from the fire alarm system control unit that activates any required smoke-control system component such as relays, fans, dampers, or stair pressurization systems.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-88

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PUBLICATION: January 6, 1998

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Requirement of at least one (1) handrail for every stairway on existing buildings

CODE: Building- Appendix Chapter 34

SECTION: Section 3407.2

The following interpretation is to be applied to all stairways of buildings inspected for Appendix Chapter 34, Division I.

Every stairway shall have at least one handrail.

EXCEPTION

Stairways having less than four risers.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-87

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PUBLICATION: June 30, 1997

SUBJECT: Policy- Separate electric meters

CODE: Electrical

SECTION: 504.4

"Housing for older persons" means housing intended and operated for occupancy by at least one person. In compliance with the State of Texas Utilities Code- Chapter 184, the following exception will be added to Section 404.4 of the Houston Electrical Code:

"Exception: This Section shall not apply to the issuance of a permit for the construction of housing for older persons with 100 or more dwelling units."

55 years of age or older per dwelling unit.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-86

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: May 19, 1997

SUBJECT: Interpretation- School vocational shops

CODE: Building

SECTION: 305.2.4

Classrooms located within the vocational shop area and used by the shop students will be considered as part of the shop area and will not require a separation. The code does require a one-hour separation between shop areas and other portions of the building and also between each vocational shop area.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-85-b

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 6, 2003

SUBJECT: Policy - Stair re-entry doors in existing buildings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 403.12 & 1003.3.1.3.4.1

Exit doors into exit stairway enclosures in existing high-rise buildings shall be maintained unlocked from the stairway side on at least every fifth floor level.

EXCEPTIONS:

All stairway doors may be locked from the ingress side subject to all of the following conditions:

1. Required re-entry doors, on at least every fifth floor, which are locked from the stairway side, shall have the capability of being unlocked without unlatching upon a signal from an approved location. (See Section 1005.3.2.4 of the Fire Code) and be subordinate to the fire alarm.
2. A telephone or other two-way communication system connected to an approved emergency service which operates continuously shall be provided at least every fifth floor in each required stairway.
3. A sign shall be placed on the stair side of the stair entry door identifying that floor and nearest floor above and below where a telephone or two-way communication system is located.
4. All manual and electronic locking devices on required exit doors in the stairways shall be subordinate to the fire alarm. Keys for stairwell re-entry doors shall be in compliance with HFD LSB Standard 06.

Gary Bridges
Building Official

Dan H. Pruitt, Sr.
Asst. Fire Marshal

GB/DHP/SB/lf

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CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-85

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PUBLICATION: April 18, 1997

SUBJECT: Policy- Stair re-entry doors in existing buildings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 403.9

Exit doors into exit stairway enclosures in existing high-rise buildings shall be maintained unlocked from the stairway side on at least every fifth floor level.

EXCEPTIONS

All stairway doors may be locked subject to all of the following conditions

1. Required re-entry doors, on at least every fifth floor, which are locked from the stairway side, shall have the capability of being unlocked without unlatching upon a signal from an approved location. (See Section 1210.4 of the Fire Code).
2. A telephone or other two-way communications system connected to an approved emergency service which operates continuously shall be provided at least every fifth floor in each required stairway.
3. A sign shall be placed on the stair side of the stair entry door identifying that floor and nearest floor above and below where a telephone or two-way communication system is located.
4. All electronic locking devices on required exit doors shall be subordinate to any required fire alarm system.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official
MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-84

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 17, 1997

SUBJECT: Foundation elevation

CODE: Building

SECTION: 510.1

The minimum height requirement of a foundation above the nearest manhole as specified in Section 510 of the Building Code will not be required in annexed subdivisions provided:

1. The subdivision was platted and recorded prior to annexation, and
2. The sanitary sewer system for the subdivision was installed prior to annexation, and
3. The drainage piping from a building meets the requirements of Section 710 of the Plumbing Code.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-83

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PUBLICATION: April 3, 1997

SUBJECT: Policy- Accessible Route

CODE: Building

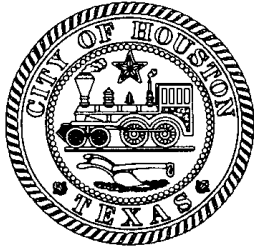
SECTION: 4.3.2 of T.A.S.

The following exception shall be applicable to the above section:

For sites where the natural terrain or other unusual property characteristics do not allow the provisions of an accessible route of travel from the public way to the building, the point of vehicular debarkation may be substituted for the accessible entrance to the site.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-82

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 1, 1997

SUBJECT: Policy- Vertical openings in dwelling units

CODE: Building

SECTION: 711

Vertical openings such as elevator shafts and ducts that are located within a single dwelling unit need not be enclosed. This is consistent with the requirements as allowed in the Standard Building Code and the National Building Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-81

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 27, 1997

SUBJECT: Policy-Exterior stairs

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1006.3.3.1

As per section 104.2.8 alternate to the definition of exterior stairway as defined in section 1006.3.3.1 a stairway will be considered as exterior provided the stairway is in compliance with the following:

1. The stairway is attached to exterior exit balconies or open breezeways;
2. The exterior exit balconies or open breezeways are protected with a sprinkler system in compliance with NFPA 13 or 13R;
3. The stairway must have at least one open side except for required structural columns and open-type handrails and guardrails;
4. The adjoining open area shall be either a yard, court or public way; and
5. The stairway and ceilings above the stairway shall be designed to prevent the accumulation of smoke and toxic gases.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-80

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 26, 1997

SUBJECT: Required connection to the public sewer

CODE: Plumbing and Code of Ordinances

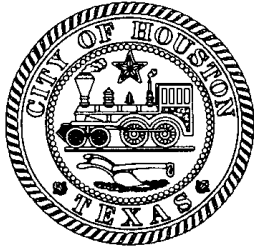
SECTION: 101.4.7, 713.4 and Chapter 47, Section 47-11 of the Code of Ordinances

To be in compliance with the Code of Ordinances Chapter 47, Section 47-11, all buildings are required to connect to the public sewer when the property is located within three hundred (300) feet of a public sewer.

The Code of Ordinances will prevail regardless of the footage stated in Section 713.4 of the City of Houston Plumbing Code.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-79

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: October 15, 1996

SUBJECT: Utility release option

CODE: Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing

PURPOSE : Utility release options allow such items as dishwashers, ranges, condensing units, charcoal cooktops and other such fixtures and appliances to be absent from the completed residence during the final inspection while providing approval for the release of utility connections.

PERMIT: A permit for each craft involved in a particular appliance or fixtures is required to facilitate a Utility Release Option. Permits must be purchased at the same time the regular permit is obtained, or at any point during construction of the house.

Procedure

Plumbing

A "temporary gas permit" must be obtained by the licensed plumber using the project number of the primary construction project. Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a temporary gas permit will indicate to the inspector that certain plumbing items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called in to the Plumbing Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a temporary gas permit and that certain plumbing items will be absent at the time of the final inspection. All plumbing other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the temporary gas permit will allow the gas utility company to install the gas meter.

The primary project will not be fully finalized until the missing appliances or fixtures are installed and inspected by the plumbing inspector. The primary project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the missing equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The plumbing contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection on the primary permit as soon as the missing plumbing items are completed.

Mechanical

Air Conditioning contractors who will complete the installation of the environmental air conditioning system less the condensing unit, and/or complete the installation of the air-conditioning system less the kitchen ventilation device, must follow the provisions of Code Word 97- 68.

Electrical

A “Miscellaneous Electrical Permit” for those items that will be absent at the time of final inspection must be obtained by the Master Electrician using a new project number. This type permit is called a “single trade permit” . Contractors shall schedule a final inspection as usual. The existence of a miscellaneous permit will indicate to the inspector that certain electrical items will be absent. At the time the inspection is called in to the Electrical Section, the contractor shall clearly indicate that there is a miscellaneous permit and that certain electrical items will be absent at the time of final inspection. All electrical other than the specific item(s) to remain absent shall be complete and in compliance with the code. Upon approval by the inspector, the electrical permit on the primary project number will be finalized. The miscellaneous permit remains active and at such time the missing items are complete, the contractor must call for inspection using the single trade miscellaneous permit number.

The single-trade project will remain active for a period of one-hundred eighty (180) days. During that period, it is expected that the missing connection, equipment or fixture will be installed and inspected.

The electrical contractor must remain vigilant and secure inspection as soon as the missing items have been installed.

Important Note:

Construction superintendents, builders, developers or others in control of construction projects must direct their MEP subcontractors to contact the Building Inspection Division, City of Houston, for instructions and assistance in establishing the appropriate utility release permits. Only licensed contractors may obtain the necessary permits.

Plumbing Inspection Section.....713-535-7700
Electrical Inspection Section.....713-535-7600
Mechanical Inspection Section.....713-535-7755

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-78

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: February 1, 1996

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Existing transit shed

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3401 and 311 and NFPA 307

Existing transit sheds shall be placed in a Group S, Division 1 occupancy as provided in Section 311 of the Uniform Building Code. It is assumed that such use was legal at the time of construction and complied with the codes at that time. The Building Code, Section 3401 and NFPA 307 (1-2) will allow these buildings to continue in operation, however, this does not apply to the construction of a new terminal building or the change of its use. New buildings and changes of use shall be classified according to its use or character under the current building code.

The existing use or occupancy of the building may continue only if its use and occupancy is not unsafe pursuant to the provisions of Section 102 of the Building Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-77

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 4, 1996

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Grease interceptors

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 1012.0 and Appendix H

Grease interceptors may be installed in series for one establishment provided the capacity of the first interceptor is not less than 1000 gallons and the total of all the interceptors is equal or greater than the capacity required in Appendix H.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-76

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 28, 1995
SUBJECT: Electronic locking devices
CODE: Building
SECTION: 1003.3.1.8

SPECIFIC APPROVAL

When approved by the Building Official, electronic locking devices may be used to meet specialized security needs such as, but not limited to, Alzheimer units, money handling rooms for security purposes, night operation of convenience stores or police stations, etc. This specific approval will require the door to be monitored by an on-site guard, staff or employee trained in the method of releasing the locking device at times when the building or space is occupied.

A separate permit for specific approval shall be required for each locking device and may be revoked at any time by the Building Official for due cause.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-75

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 27, 1995

SUBJECT: Policy- Plans and profile drawings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 106.4.1

A “conditional” permit for a project requiring plans and profile utility drawings may be issued prior to the plan and profile drawing approval provided the owner makes a written request to the building official that includes the following:

1. A description of the work requiring a plan and profile.
2. A confirmed compliance date.
3. A statement acknowledging and agreeing to the condition that if the plans and profile drawing have not been approved by the compliance date, as agreed upon, the City of Houston will not grant final inspection, the Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued and final release of utilities will not be granted.
4. A statement acknowledging and agreeing to the condition that failure to obtain approval within the specified time may result in citations being issued pursuant to the code.
5. A statement releasing the City of any and all liability for the proposed project in the event that the City is unable to provide the specific utility services proposed in the plans and profile drawings.

The issuance of the “conditional” permit shall be approved by the Building Official and the Manager of the Utility Analysis Section.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

Charles Settle
Assistant Director

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-74

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 19, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Main exit doors

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1003.3.1.8 & 1007.2.5

This Code Word is to clarify that one building or space can have more than one main exit as allowed in the exception of these sections. Any door or pair of doors that are used by the general public as an entrance and exit to and from the business, will be considered as a main exit. Any door provided for exit purposes only, will not be considered as a main exit and will not be allowed to use these exceptions.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-73

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: August 18, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Change of occupancy

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3405

In accordance with this section, any existing building may have its occupancy changed to an occupancy within the same hazard group or to an occupancy in a lesser hazard group without complying with all the requirements of the building code for a new building. To determine the degree of hazard for such change, the "Uniform Code for Building Conservation" as published by the International Conference of Building Officials, shall be used. The use of this code shall not include the appendix.

Requirements for a fire alarm system or a sprinkler system shall be provided as required for a new building when the occupancy or the character of use within the same occupancy is changed.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-72

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: August 2, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Retail storage areas

CODE: Building

SECTION: 309.2.2

Stock areas within auto parts stores, shoe stores or similar retail stores shall not be considered as storage rooms and will not be required to be separated.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-71

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: July 28, 1995

SUBJECT: Insulating Material for Type 1 Grease Ducts and Hoods

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 507.6

As an alternate to the one-hour enclosure required by this section, the following method may be used:

1. Insulating material may not be used in lieu of a shaft or enclosure where required by Section 711 of the Building Code, or by any other part of the Houston Building or Fire Code System.
2. Insulating material used in lieu of an enclosure shall meet or exceed the following thermal characteristics.
 - (i) the insulating material shall be capable of withstanding a continuous temperature of 1,900 degrees F.
 - (ii) the insulating material shall be of a density and thickness consistent with an R value of at least ten (10).
3. It shall be the responsibility of the hood manufacturer or kitchen contractor to install on all portions of the hood (canopy) above the ceiling insulation of the same density and thickness of insulating material used on the grease duct.
4. Nonrigid insulating material shall be securely fastened along its entire exterior surface with wire, metal bands or straps.

5. No glues or adhesives shall be used to secure insulation unless such glues or adhesives have been pre-approved for such use by the Building Official.
6. Rigid insulating material shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions where manufacturer's instructions are not available, or are deemed unacceptable by the Building Official, rigid insulating material shall be attached in the following manner:
 - (i) Rigid insulating material boards or bats shall be installed so that joints and seams attain full closure.
 - (ii) Metal banding or plumbers strap shall secure rigid insulating material at intervals deemed sufficient to support and secure the material. The corners or edges of the insulating material where contacted by fasteners, straps or bands shall at that point be protected by angle iron of not less than 16 gauge material.
 - (iii) No glues or adhesives shall be used to secure rigid insulation unless pre-approved by the Building Official.
 - (iv) It shall be the responsibility of the hood manufacturer or kitchen contractor to install on all portions of the hood (canopy) above the ceiling insulation of the same density and thickness of insulating material used on the grease duct.
7. Where a grease duct enters a structural shaft, insulating material shall extend into the shaft approximately 12 inches.
8. Insulating material specifications and manufacturer's installation instructions shall be available to the inspector at the time of inspection.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-70

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: May 19, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation- double doors

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1003.3.1.8

When a pair of doors are used and only one of the doors is included in the required exit width calculations, only the one door that is included in the exit width calculations will be considered an exit door. Therefore Section 1003.3.1.8 would not apply to the door adjacent to the "Exit Door." Consequently, the use of manually operated edge or surface mounted flush bolts or surface bolts would be acceptable. In addition, a sign must be permanently installed on the adjacent door stating, "This Door to Remain Unlocked During Business Hours."

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-69

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: May 17, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - One-hour rating for metal walls

CODE: Building

SECTION: 709.5

A one-hour rated wall obtained by a cementitious material sprayed on steel siding and complying with a listed design will be acceptable with the test made from the cementitious side only.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-68

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: April 21, 1995

SUBJECT: Utility inspection procedure

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 106

The following procedure applies only to dwellings of occupancy classification R-3.

A mechanical contractor may obtain a "utility inspection" prior to installing a condensing unit and/or kitchen ventilator provided the following conditions are met:

1. A temporary inspection fee of \$25.00 has been paid in accordance with Section 110.3.2 of the Houston Uniform Building Code. Such fee shall be paid by obtaining a separate HVAC permit in addition to the regular installation permit. The utility permit must be specified at the time of application as an "AY" permit type.
2. All other components of the HVAC system are complete and installed in accordance with code requirements.
3. Kitchen Ventilation:
 - (i) Ductwork serving future ventilation equipment, whether such ductwork is installed underground, within kitchen cabinetwork or elsewhere, must be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.
 - (ii) Electrical wiring serving future kitchen ventilation equipment shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed ventilation equipment.

4. Air-Conditioning Condensing Unit:

- (i) Refrigeration piping, pipe insulation and control wiring serving future condensing unit(s) shall be installed to the point of connection to the proposed condensing unit, be in accordance with the code and prepared to accept the condensing unit(s).
- (ii) Electrical wiring serving a future condensing unit(s) shall be installed prior to the utility inspection, be in accordance with code and prepared to accept the proposed condensing unit(s).

5. Final Inspection:

- (i) Upon installation of the ventilation or condensing unit, the mechanical contractor (permittee) shall notify the Mechanical Section in a manner established and consistent with the scheduling of any other inspection and shall request a final utility inspection. The mechanical contractor shall make all necessary preparations with builders, homeowners, etc., to facilitate the inspector's access to the property at the time of inspection.
- (ii) Such utility inspection shall be secured within ten (10) working days of the date of installation of either the proposed ventilation equipment or proposed condensing unit.

6. Non Conformance Sanctions:

- (i) Mechanical contractors (permittee), upon failure to secure final inspection as indicated in item 5 above, will be subject to sanctions including but not limited to the following:
 - a. The contractor's ability to obtain permits will be suspended until compliance is secured.
 - b. A Municipal Court citation may be issued pursuant to Section 111.2 of the Houston Uniform Mechanical Code.
 - c. Additional use of the Utility Inspection procedure will be suspended.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official
MLE/BB/lf
MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-67

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 13, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Roof drains

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: General Requirements of Appendix D

Appendix D states:

"Where top of drain leaders do not exceed twenty-five (25) feet above the top of curb or ground at the property line, drains may be taken through the curb or into the road ditch. Where the top of the drain leaders do exceed twenty-five (25) feet above the curb or ground at the property line, drains must be taken into a catch basin or curb inlet."

Down-spouts from roof gutters will not be required to be connected directly to a catch basin provided they are not located on the property line and surface drainage is provided as required by Section 47-36 of the Code of Ordinances.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-66

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PUBLICATION: March 9, 1995

SUBJECT: Policy- Location of downspouts

CODE: Plumbing - Appendix D

SECTION: General

Gutters and downspouts accepting roof water to be designed using Appendix D, City of Houston Plumbing Code. All downspouts shall be connected to the gutter not to exceed 60' - 0" distance between downspout connections.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-65

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 6, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Floor drains for S-3 and S-4 occupancies

CODE: Building

SECTION: 311.2.3

Floors that drain to a separator will only be required in service station bays and repair garages that may be subject to oil spillage and will not be required in garages used only for vehicle parking or under service station pump canopies.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-64

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 31, 1995

SUBJECT: Policy- Fire Stations

CODE: Building

SECTION: Chapter 11

In order to be consistent with the State's requirements, the review of the fire stations for accessibility shall be limited to accessible parking space, accessible route, public entry, assembly room and public toilet rooms.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-63

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: February 15, 1995

SUBJECT: Attic access to gas fired furnaces

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 315 Item 5

An access opening to a warm-air furnace located in a ventilated attic may be placed in the ceiling of a bedroom.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-61

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 12, 1995

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Accessibility to doctor and dental offices

CODE: Building

SECTION: Chapter 11

Interior spaces in a doctor or dental office will be required to provide accessibility for the public-use areas only.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-60

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 29, 1994

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Accessibility to stages

CODE: Building

SECTION: Chapter 11

Accessibility required by this chapter shall not include platforms as defined in Section 405.1.2 of the Building Code but shall include stages as defined in this section.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-59

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 24, 1994

SUBJECT: Policy- Guard booth accessibility

CODE: Building

SECTION: Chapter 11

A Guard Booth or Shack shall be considered as a work area and will not be required to provide accessibility until such time when an employee with a disability will be involved.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-58

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: July 14, 1994

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Private restrooms

CODE: Building

SECTION: Chapter 11

The requirements of restrooms in this chapter pertain to public or common-use bathing and toilet facilities only and shall not apply to facilities for the occupants of private offices.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-57

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: June 29, 1994

SUBJECT: Areas for rescue assistance in open parking garages

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1104

An area for rescue assistance will not be required in open parking garages designed for natural ventilation in accordance with Section 311.9.2.2 of the Building Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-56

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: June 11, 1994

SUBJECT: Listed Type 1 commercial kitchen exhaust systems

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 507

Exhaust hoods tested in accordance with U.L. Standard 710, listed and labeled by an approved testing agency are acceptable for use with commercial cooking equipment if installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and terms of their listing.

Ancillary components of the exhaust hood must comply with the terms of listing. Where listing conditions or manufacturer's instructions do not address a specific items, the provisions of Section 507 of the Houston Mechanical Code shall govern that item.

The components and configuration of each such system incorporating a listed hood is subject to the review and approval of the Building Official prior to its installation. Plans shall be submitted for review in accordance with Section 113.2 of the Houston Uniform Mechanical Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-55

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 14, 1994

SUBJECT: Testing gas pipe systems

CODE: Plumbing and Fire

SECTION: 1203 & 1106

Testing of gas piping systems in Group R Division 3 Occupancies (Townhomes) will be required if either of the following exist:

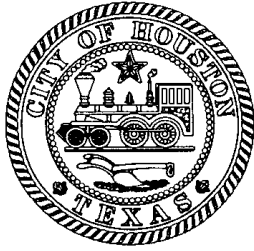
- 1.) a common attic space
- 2.) the use of a central gas meter

Townhomes that have the required fire separation extending to the under side of the roof and have individual gas meters are not required to have a five year gas test.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

D. H. Pruitt
Asst. Fire Marshal

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-54

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: March 11, 1994

SUBJECT: Condensate removal

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 310

R1 Occupancies

I. In R1 Occupancies only, where a cooling coil or cooling unit is installed in a furred space, attic, on a floor of the building above the ground floor, or in any area where damage may result from condensate overflow:

1. One pan with a standing overflow and a separate secondary drain may be provided in lieu of a secondary pan. The additional pan or standing overflow shall be provided with a drain pipe, minimum 3/4" nominal pipe size, discharging at a point which can be readily observed.
2. In the event that factory made equipment is provided with no standing overflow, or if the configuration of the installation makes it impractical to install a separate auxiliary drain line, a single primary drain may be used with no secondary drain pan or secondary drain line provided a float switch is installed in the main drain pan to shut off the cooling system in the event of condensate overflow.

R3 Occupancies

Air conditioning units installed in closets of R3 residential buildings may discharge condensate into a funnel drain without a trap primer, provided that: the trap is above the floor, the funnel is above the platform and is accessible when the closet door is open.

All Occupancy Classifications

II. In any occupancy, when a cooling coil or cooling unit is located in an area where the required secondary condensate drain pipe cannot be routed to a point which can readily be observed, the secondary drain pan or standing overflow outlet may be connected to the main drain line downstream of the primary drain pan provided the following requirements are met:

1. A float-switch designed to shut off the cooling unit is installed in the primary drain pan.
2. Appropriate fittings for the condensate piping in use are employed to make the secondary to primary pipe connection.
3. Adequate pipe insulation is installed on and around the secondary to primary pipe connection.

III. Condensate drains shall not connect to the tailpiece of a kitchen sink or to any such fixture serving a food preparation area, nor shall secondary drains be stubbed-out over any such fixture in a food preparation area.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-53

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: February 4, 1994

SUBJECT: Fire and radiation dampers in existing fire-rated ceiling assemblies

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 605

Existing fire or radiation dampers may remain in existing fire-rated ceiling assemblies provided such fire or radiation dampers are not removed and reinstalled, or altered. Additionally, such fire or radiation dampers must exist in a condition acceptable to code regulations in effect at the time of their original installation.

Existing fire or radiation dampers in existing ceiling assemblies may be relocated within the ceiling assembly provided such relocation does not require the fire or radiation damper assembly to be disconnected from its existing connecting air duct. Additional ducts shall not be added to facilitate relocation of the fire or radiation damper assembly.

New openings in the ceiling assembly shall be protected in accordance with Section 605 of the Houston Uniform Mechanical Code.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-52

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: December 15, 1993

SUBJECT: Electrical permits for outdoor signs

CODE: Sign

SECTION: 110.6

Electrical shop and electrical installation inspection permits are required for each new sign which is wired separately when installed **unless** the sign is circumscribed and permitted as **one** sign.

In order to assure that the appropriate electrical fees are assessed, electrical permits for exterior signs should be purchased in conjunction with sign permits from the Sign Administration office.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-51

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 1, 1993
SUBJECT: Interpretation - Floor drains and indirect waste receptors in walk-in coolers and freezers

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 801.2 and Code of Ordinances 20.21, Item 17

The Code of Ordinances 20.21, Item 17, prohibits the direct connection of any floor drain or indirect
Section 801.2 allows floor drains and indirect waste receptors in walk-in coolers and freezers to be directly connected to the sanitary sewer system when only packaged food products are stored.

waste receptor in walk-in coolers or freezers.

Interpretation:

To maintain compatibility with the Health Department requirements, all floor drains and indirect waste receptors in walk-in coolers and freezers shall be indirectly connected to the sanitary sewer system.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-50

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PUBLICATION: November 1, 1993

SUBJECT: Interpretation -Cross connection control

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 603.2.2 & 603.3.16

While Section 603.3.16 allows as a minimum two (2) rubber faced listed check valves, one of which may be an alarm check valve for cross connection control on fire protection systems, some systems have substances such as ethylene glycol added for freeze protection. Any fire protection with any medium other than water, shall require a backflow prevention assembly listed for the hazard to protect the water system from a potential cross connection. Section 603.2.2 requires all backflow prevention assemblies to be tested and certified by a certified backflow prevention assembly tester.

Interpretation

In view of the above requirements, when a backflow prevention assembly is required to protect the city water supply, a plumbing permit will be required and an inspection by Plumbing Inspection personnel will also be required. A certificate of test by a certified tester will be posted for the inspector at the job site when the inspection is made.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-49

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 4, 1993

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Day cares not in private residences

CODE: Building

SECTION: 305.1

Day care facilities with six (6) or fewer persons shall be considered an accessory use to the main occupancy of the building.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-48

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 4, 1993

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Day cares in private residences

CODE: Building

SECTION: 305.1 and 310.1

Section 305.1

This Section requires that any building or portion thereof used for day care purposes for more than six (6) persons shall be classified in a Group E Division 3 Occupancy.

Section 310.1

Day cares for six (6) persons or less shall be classified as a Group R Division 3 Occupancy.

Interpretation

For the purposes of determining whether a day care is an E-3 or a R-3, the caregiver's own preschool children shall be included in the six (6) persons allowed. Other caregiver's own older children shall not be counted as a part of the six (6) persons allowed.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-47

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: September 29, 1992

SUBJECT: Interpretation -Bathroom & clothes dryer ducts

CODE: Building

SECTION: 709.6 & 710.2

Penetrations may be made in gypsum wallboard membranes for one-hour protection for bathroom and clothes dryer exhaust ducts without fire dampers provided:

- I. A minimum of 0.019-inch (26 gauge) steel ducts are used continuously from the opening to the exterior or into a rated shaft.
2. Voids around the duct penetration shall be sealed with approved materials to prevent the passage of flame.
3. The maximum size of the bathroom fan assembly shall be 100 square inches.
4. The maximum size of the clothes dryer duct shall be 20 square inches.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-46

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: September 21, 1992

SUBJECT: Policy-Storm drainage for courtyards

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: Appendix D

Storm drainage for courtyards located within the perimeter of a building shall be sized in accordance with Appendix D of the Plumbing Code and will be checked by the plumbing plan examiner.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-45

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: August 20, 1992

SUBJECT: Policy- Minimum required foundation

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1806

A foundation for additions to conventional construction and for Group U occupancies which 1) is classified as exempt by Section 20 (d) of the Texas Engineering Practice Act and 2) meets or exceeds the specifications contained on page 2 of this policy shall be considered to comply with the Houston Building Code. No engineer's seal and no soils report is required. Other designs, including post-tension designs, must bear the seal of a Texas registered engineer.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

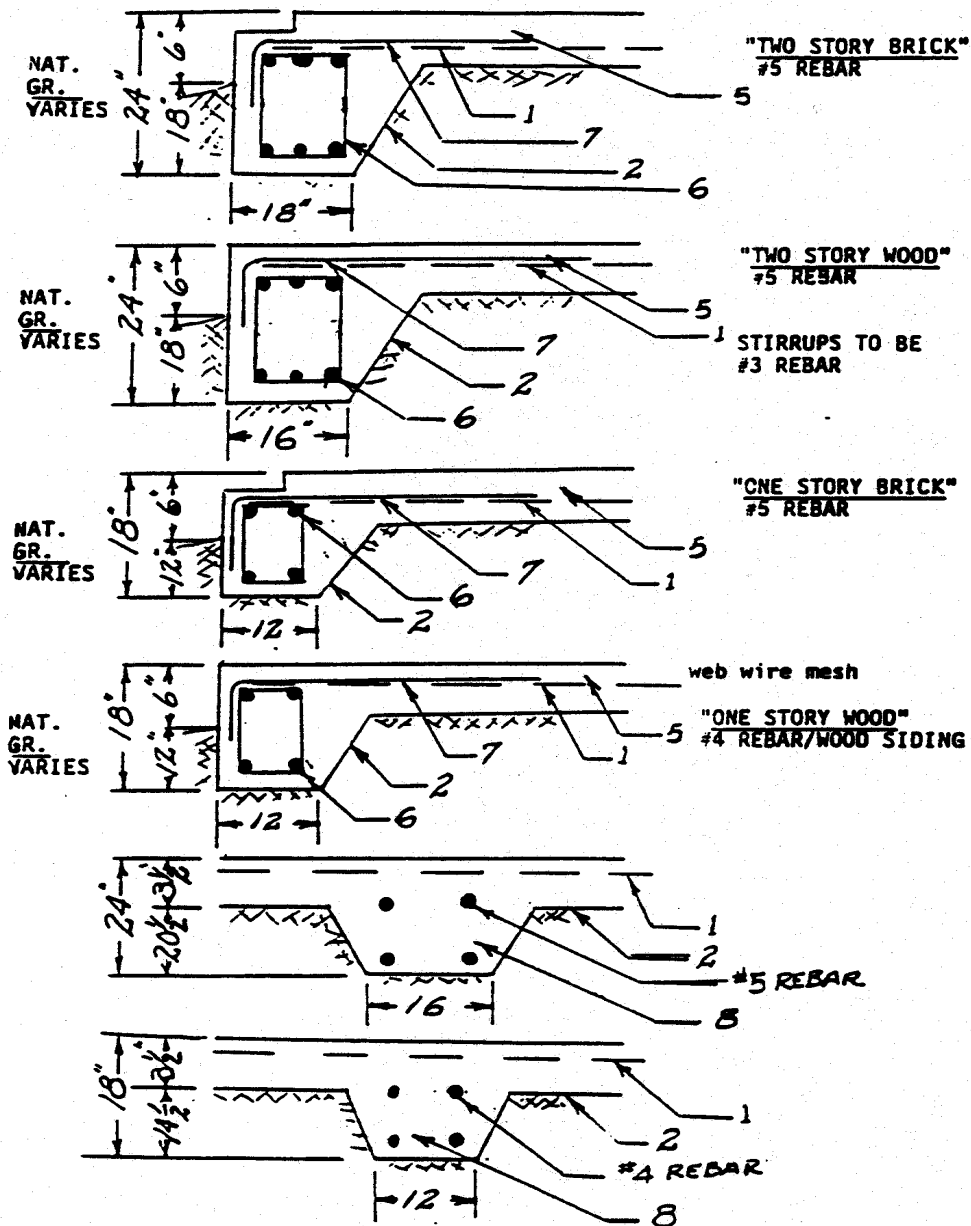
Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-45 -diagram

Page 2 of 2



CONSTRUCTION NOTES

1. All slabs shall be reinforced. #6 web wire mesh 6" x 6" minimum.
2. All house slabs shall have a 6 mil vapor barrier using poly or approved material.
3. All slabs shall be a min. of 3 1/2" thick with a 4" sand cushion.
4. Concrete shall have a minimum of 2000 PSF in 28 days.
5. Steel shall be covered with a 2" of concrete.
6. Stirrups to be #3 rebar.
7. Shear reinforcing at intersection of slab and all beams to be #4 rebar, 5' long, 5' on center.
8. Steel shall be covered with 3" of concrete.
9. Interior beams every 20' linear ft. or under bearing partition.



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-44

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 29, 1992

SUBJECT: Policy- Survey of lot

CODE: Building

SECTION: 108.1

The purpose of this policy on survey requirements is to assure that proposed construction does not cross any property lines without proper easements, does not extend onto or across easements without proper written permission, does not violate building line restrictions and does maintain the proper distance from underground pipelines or railroad easements.

Sufficient lot and construction dimension information must be provided to conduct a satisfactory plan review. Acceptable alternates for the survey may be one of the following:

1. A copy of the survey furnished to the buyer when the property was purchased is normally required for all title insurance policies. The owner either has a copy or one may be obtained from the mortgage company holding the note on the property.
2. A complete plot plan usually satisfies the intent for a survey. A plot plan which is signed, sealed and dated by an architect or engineer, with a statement that it is complete, is acceptable. The plot plan shall show all property lines, building setback lines, building locations, easements and indicate the type of easement. The plot plan shall show driveway width and radius of turn at the curbs. If the plot plan appears to be incomplete or the drawing raises some questions to its accuracy, a survey may be required.
3. For single family residential, a complete plot plan usually satisfies the intent for a survey. The plot plan shall show all property lines, building setback lines, building locations, easements and indicate the type of easement. The plot plan shall show driveway width and radius of turn at the curbs. If the plot plan appears to be incomplete or the drawing raises some questions to its accuracy, a survey may be required.

4. A plot plan is required when foundation repair is proposed. It must show easements that affect proposed construction, existing buildings and property lines which affects adjacent property owners in those cases where structures are situated on a property with no building setback lines or such construction as townhouses with zero lot line separations.

The following must be included on the plot plan:

Easements for permanent encroachment where foundation work extends across the property line of patio homes and zero lot line houses.

SURVEY OF LOT CONTINUED

Page 2 of 2

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 43

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: August 13, 1991

SUBJECT: Interpretation -Restrooms openings into corridors

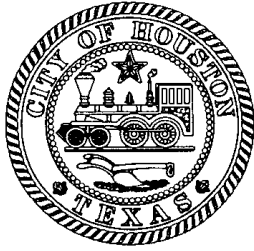
CODE: Building

SECTION: 1004.3.4

A separation will not be required between a restroom and a corridor provided the ceiling and walls of the restroom are constructed as required for the corridor.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-42

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 1, 1991

SUBJECT: Size of potable water piping

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 610.0

Fixture Units

	Total Fixtures		=	Units
	Allowed	Each Item		
Water Closets	2	3	=	6
Bathtubs (with or without shower head over)	2	2	=	4
Shower	1	2	=	2
Lavatory	3	1	=	3
Kitchen Sink	1	2	=	2
Clothes washer	1	2	=	2
Hose Bibb	1	3	=	3

Total = 22

Any residential remodel or addition which would exceed a total of 22 fixture units will be required to comply with the current code requirements for water sizing. (EXCEPTION: A residential remodel or addition which would total 23 or 24 fixture units may be approved by the Plumbing Division Manager.)

The City of Houston will allow the following sizing on existing residences being remodeled or added on to with an existing 5/8" meter and 3/4" building supply:

Current Code would require a 1" water meter and a 1" building supply for the same fixture total. (NOTE: The above information is based on an average 100' developed length from the meter to the farthest most outlet on the water system using Table 6-4., Pressure Range 30-45 p.s.i.)

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official
MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-41

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PUBLICATION: January 15, 1990

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Existing bedroom windows

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3403, 310.4

Existing bedroom windows, including the frames that do not meet the current code, may be replaced with not less than the same size opening in the same location.

All replaced glass will be required to meet the safety glazing requirements of Chapter 24.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-40

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 24, 1990

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Fire alarm systems

CODE: Building- Life Safety Appendix

SECTION: 3412 A

The minimum requirement of this section is to provide a local fire alarm system for existing buildings that are either annexed into the City or were constructed within the City prior to Code requirements for alarm systems.

The reference to Section 403 shall be considered only for the purpose of requiring the evacuation alarm to sound on the floor of incidence, the floor above, the floor below and be heard clearly by all occupants of these floors.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-39

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PUBLICATION: July 30, 1990

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Wired glass in existing corridor doors

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3407.3 of the Life Safety Appendix

Existing glass in corridor doors may be replaced with polished wired glass, without limitation to the opening size, when complying with this Section.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-38

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: May 23, 1990

SUBJECT: Procedure- Glass in corridor walls

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1004.3.4.2.2 & 3407.3 of the Life Safety Appendix

As an alternate to the wired glass allowed in corridor walls by Section 1004.3.4.2.2 of the Building Code and in Section 3407.3 of the Life Safety Appendix, regular glass may be used subject to the following:

1. Both sides of the glass shall be protected by a sprinkler system equipped with listed quick-response sprinklers. The sprinklers shall be spaced 6 feet or less along both sides of the glass, not more than 1 foot from the glass and located so that the entire surface of the glass is wet upon operation.
2. The glass shall meet the safety and design requirements of Chapter 24.
3. Obstructions such as curtain rods, curtains, drapes or similar materials shall not be installed between the sprinkler and the glass.

Glass doors will be permitted provided they are considered as a part of the allowable glass area.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-37

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 9, 1990

SUBJECT: Policy- Occupancy classification of emergency shelter for children

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3

Facilities sheltering children twelve (12) years of age or older with a maximum occupancy load not to exceed ten (10) children - Group R, Division 3 Occupancy

Facilities sheltering five (5) or less children regardless of age - Group R, Division 3 Occupancy.

Facilities sheltering six (6) or more children less than six (6) years of age Group I, Division 1

Occupant loads shall be calculated from Chapter 10 of the Building Code but shall not exceed the total approved by the Texas Department of Human Resources License, a copy of which shall be submitted when applying for a Certificate of Occupancy.

Facilities sheltering six (6) or more children between the age of six (6) years through eleven (11) years of age - Group I, Division 2 Occupancy.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-36

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 30, 1989

SUBJECT: Policy- Plumbing facilities for schools

CODE: Building

SECTION: Appendix Chapter 29

When determining the fixture requirements, the occupancy load may be based on a maximum students per classroom. A letter shall be received from the school district indicating the maximum student limit and a copy of this letter shall be entered into the official permit file. When using this figure, the maximum occupant load shown on the occupancy certificate shall not exceed this number.

Note: The exit system shall be determined by the requirements of Chapter 10.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-35

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 25, 1989

SUBJECT: Policy- Blocks and base foundations

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1806

This policy is an acceptable alternate as per Section 104.2.8 of the Building Code and shall apply to conventional light-frame construction designed with girders and supported on blocks and bases in such a manner that the building can be easily leveled any time after the full load has been applied.

1. All loose material and vegetation must be removed to ensure solid bearing beneath bases.
2. Bases may be supported on previously paved areas such as parking lots.
3. Girders supporting floor joists shall be not less than 4 inches by 4 inches for spans of 5 feet or less, or not less than 4 inches by 6 inches placed on edge of spans not more than 7 feet.
4. End joints of girders shall occur over supports.
5. Minimum thickness of concrete bases shall be 4 inches.
6. The minimum width of the structure shall not be less than the overall height.
7. Girders shall not be placed further than the depth of the joist from the exterior wall.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-34

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PUBLICATION: June 22, 1989

SUBJECT: Policy- Zero lot line

CODE: Building

SECTION: Table 5-A

As an alternate to the requirements of the fire resistance of exterior walls for Group R Division 3 Occupancy, building developments which are commonly known as Patio Homes and are restricted by recorded plats and deed restrictions as to location on the property, can be constructed on the property line without a fire resistive wall provided:

1. The adjacent structures are a minimum of 6 feet apart and;
2. The adjacent roof projections are not less than 4 feet apart.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-33

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PUBLICATION: March 13, 1989

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Extent of exit enclosure (existing)

CODE: Building- Appendix Chapter 34

SECTION: 3407.1

As an alternate method of providing two separate distinct exits, exit enclosures may discharge into and through a street-floor lobby, provided the required exit width is free and unobstructed and the street/ground floor is protected with an automatic sprinkler system.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 32

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PUBLICATION: February 23, 1989

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Wind bracing

CODE: Building

SECTION: 2320.11.3

Normal wind bracing covered by Section 2320.11.3 requires a minimum of eight feet (8') of bracing to occur in each (25') of continuous wall. Preferably that bracing occurs in two (2) four foot (4') increments (one at each corner of the continuous wall and as many as necessary in between to meet the requirement of 8' in 25').

When building wall configurations, openings for doors and windows and/or construction material types interfere with normal bracing installation, the drawings must show bracing details including materials used and an attachment schedule to show conformance with Chapter 23 of the Houston Building Code.

An acceptable alternate is to submit properly sealed drawings prepared by an engineer with notes and details.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-31

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: February 14, 1989
SUBJECT: Policy- Residential setback
CODE: Building
SECTION: 101.3

We will continue the interpretation established by Planning and Development that the location of residences relative to the setback line will be considered in compliance when the outside face of the front wall is behind the setback line (typically the foundation). Eaves and gutter overhangs, bay windows, porches, and other limited architectural protrusions into the setback area are acceptable.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-30

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 17, 1989

SUBJECT: Policy- Portable type school buildings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 305.3

A group of portable type school buildings meeting the requirements of 503.3 shall be considered as one building. Only one side that exits from this group will be required to front on the 20 foot access to the public street and not each individual portable building.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-29

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PUBLICATION: November 21, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Fire dampers in one (1) hour rated walls

CODE: Building

SECTION: 713.11

Fire dampers will not be required in duct penetrations of one (1) hour occupancy separation walls, nor in fire-rated corridor separation walls and ceilings, provided:

1. The building is completely equipped with an automatic fire extinguishing system.
2. The ducts are constructed of steel having a thickness and not less than 0.019 inch (No. 26 gauge galvanized sheet.)
3. The duct does not penetrate the ceiling membrane of fire resistive floor-ceiling or roof-ceiling assemblies.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-28

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 15, 1988

SUBJECT: Policy- Permits for various type projects

CODE: Building

SECTION: 106.4.1

The building official shall require building permits to be issued in this manner for the following projects:

1. New shell building with multiple lease or suite.
One permit for the shell and one permit for each space.
2. Remodel of more than one lease or suite in an existing building
One permit for each space.
3. Remodel of more than one location in the interior concerning the “shell” or “core” of the building.
The number of permits is at the option of the applicant.
4. Remodel exterior of multiple buildings.
One permit each building.

Remodeling of any existing occupied area shall not increase the waste load or the square footage of the building, lease space or suite. Any change in these items constitutes new construction.

A Certificate of Compliance is available at the option of the applicant once remodeling of existing occupied area is complete.

Definition: Suite- A group of connected rooms used as a unit.

Melvin Embry
Building Official
MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-27

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: October 24, 1988

SUBJECT: Policy- Requirements for engineer seals

CODE: Building

SECTION: 106.3.2

"The Texas Engineering Practice Act" was amended in the 70th legislature by Senate Bill 604 & 605. Section 15© was added as follows: "This Act applies to all engineering practiced in this State that is not exempted under this Act. A public official of this state or of a political subdivision of this state who is charged with the enforcement of laws, ordinances, codes or regulations that affect the practice of engineering may only accept plans, specifications and other related documents prepared by registered engineers, as evidenced by the seal of the engineer. A public official shall report violations of this Act to the proper authorities".

Section 20(d) exempts from the provisions of the Act:

1. Any private dwelling, one story apartment buildings not exceeding eight units, two story apartment buildings not exceeding four units, garages or other structures pertinent to such buildings;
2. Private buildings used exclusively for farm, ranch or agricultural purposes, or used exclusively for storage of raw agricultural commodities; or
3. Other one story buildings, except public buildings, containing no clear span greater than 24 feet and having a floor area of 5000 square feet or less.

Section 19(b)(1) exempts public work under \$8000.00

The Engineering Practice Act applies to the design of structural, electrical, mechanical (heating, ventilating & air conditioning) and plumbing systems.

Plans submitted for permits will require engineer seals in accordance with state law unless specifically exempt. The design of air conditioning systems that licensed air conditioning contractors are permitted to perform under article 8861, V.T.C.S., serves as an exception to the

Engineering Practice Act. Accordingly, the Engineering Practice Act, article 3271a, V.T.C.S., does not apply to design work performed by licensed air conditioning contractors under article 8861, V.T.C.S, the Air Conditioning Contractor License Law.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/GB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-26

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 3, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Omission of sprinklers in machine rooms

CODE: Building

SECTION: 904.4 Item 1

Elevator machine rooms shall be considered as being a room complying with this item, therefore sprinklers may be omitted, provided:

1. The elevator room is separated from the remainder of the building by a fire resistive occupancy separation at least equal to that required for the hoistway enclosure with a minimum of one hour.
2. The machine room shall be used exclusively for machine and equipment required for the operation of the elevator.
3. Smoke detectors are provided as required by Section 211.3b of the Elevator Safety Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-25

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: September 26, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation- smoke detectors in parking garages

CODE: Building

SECTION: 403.3

As an alternate to the detectors required by this section, a rate-of-rise heat detector will be allowed in parking garages classified as a Group S Division 3 Occupancy.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-24

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: July 7, 1988

SUBJECT: Policy- Furnaces located in attics and under floor spaces

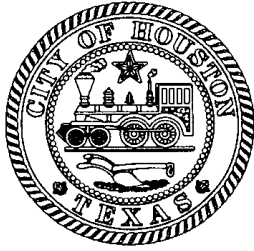
CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 319.6 and 320.1(5)

In lieu of the Mechanical Code requirements for electric receptacles, lighting outlets and switches for furnaces located in an attic area, the requirements of Section 210-63, 210-70, 430-102(b) and 430-109 of the National Electrical Code and the Houston Electrical Code shall apply.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-23

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: June 3, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Natural gas piping in air plenums and ducts

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 317.6-2

Fuel gas piping may be installed in accessible above-ceiling spaces used as a return air plenum provided no valves or pipe unions are located in such spaces.

Fuel gas piping shall not be run through a circulating air duct, ventilating duct, chimney or gas vent. This shall not apply to combustion air duct or combustion air chase or enclosure.

CODE REFERENCE: NFPA 54, Houston Plumbing Code Section 1211.10.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-22

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PUBLICATION: March 7, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Emergency pneumatic systems

CODE: Building

SECTION: 403.8

- a. The air compressor located within the building serving life safety functions shall be located in a two (2) hour enclosure. The air compressor, dryer and associated electrical equipment shall be served from the emergency generator.
- b. The air compressor may be located within the same rated enclosure that houses the emergency generator.
- c. The main pneumatic trunkline for life safety systems shall be protected by a two (2) hour rated enclosure or shall be a material that will withstand 1800 degrees F. for two (2) hours (i.e., stainless steel).
- d. Branch pneumatic lines run in air ducts or plenums shall have a flame-spread index of not more than 25 and a smoke-developed rating of not more than 50.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-21

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: January 7, 1988

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Corridor construction

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1004.3.4.3

When a common corridor serves mixed occupancies the most restrictive occupancy shall determine the corridor requirements.

Exception: When minor uses do not occupy more than ten percent (10 %) of the area served the major use shall determine the occupancy classification.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-20

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 7, 1987

SUBJECT: Fire-retardant treated wood

CODE: Building

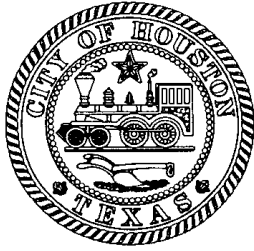
SECTION: 104.2.8

Fire-retardant treated wood as defined in Section 207 of the Building Code will be allowed as an alternate to noncombustible material in the following locations:

1. Roof decking on type II-N or Type II-one=hour construction.
2. Platforms or raised floors without occupied space underneath.
3. Roof structures such as walkways, decks, fences, flower boxes and similar appendages.
4. Any other location that is specifically approved and documented as per Section 104.2.7 or 104.2.8 of the Building Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-19

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: October 3, 1987

SUBJECT: Residential boarding and care occupancies

CODE: Building

SECTION: 310.1

Residential care occupancies as addressed in Chapter 22 of NFPA 101 shall be classified as follows:

R-1 Occupancy: Buildings that contain more than five (5) sleeping rooms.
Same as hotels.

R-3 Occupancy: Buildings that do not contain more than five (5) sleeping rooms with
an occupant load of ten (10) or less. Same as lodging houses.

Residential care occupancies shall be considered as facilities for persons 12 years of age or older, who need assistance in meeting the demands of daily life, the kind of personal care which is normally provided in the home by one family member for another, but not skilled nursing or acute medical care that would be provided in a nursing home or hospital to bedridden persons. This shall not include any facilities where the occupants are restrained.

The following are examples of residential care facilities:

1. A group housing arrangement for physically or mentally handicapped persons who normally may attend school in the community, attend church in the community or otherwise use community facilities.
2. A group housing arrangement for physically or mentally handicapped persons who are undergoing training in preparation for independent living, for paid employment or for other normal community activities.
3. A group housing arrangement for the elderly that provides personal care services but does not provide acute care.

4. Facilities for social rehabilitation, alcoholism, drug abuse, or mental health problems, that contain a group housing arrangement, and that provide personal care services but do not provide acute care.
5. Other group housing arrangements that provide personal care services but not nursing care.

Any dwelling with five (5) or less unrelated occupants will be classified in a Group R, Division 3 occupancy regardless of the occupants' medical condition.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-18

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: August 6, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Existing mechanical room ceilings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3401

Several methods were approved or accepted by the Building Official in the past to protect the structure within the mechanical room ceilings. All existing methods will be allowed to continue provided that the mechanical room is not part of a vertical opening.

All vertical openings must be protected as required by the recently adopted Life Safety Appendix and the code that was in effect when the building was constructed.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-17

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: July 23, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Existing exit signs

CODE: Building- Appendix Chapter 34

SECTION: 3407.5

This section requires that exit signs be provided for existing buildings as required by Section 1003.2.8 of the current code. This section requires that signs be provided in any occupancy when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more which in some cases will require exit signs that were not required under the previous code. It also makes exception to signs that are existing.

Existing signs will be considered as meeting the requirement of this section provided:

1. They have been maintained and are in compliance with the code under which the building was constructed.
2. They clearly indicate the direction of egress.
3. They are internally or externally illuminated or shall be of an approved self-luminous type.
4. The letters are at least 5 inches high and readily distinguishable.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-16

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: July 07, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Atriums

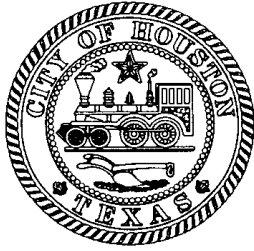
CODE: Building

SECTION: 3403

When atrium buildings are remodeled or built-out for leasing, the proposed work will have to meet only the minimum atrium code requirements or the accepted guide lines that were in effect at the time the building was built or the original permit was issued.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-15

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: June 30, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Standpipes

CODE: Building- Appendix Chapter 34

SECTION: 3410

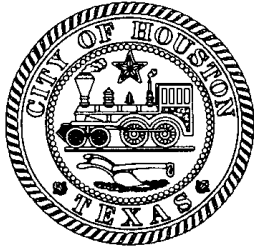
Section 3410 specifies that buildings over four (4) stories shall be provided with an approved Class I or Class III standpipe system. Section 903 only prescribes a size of outlet for these systems and not installation standards.

The Building Official considers existing wet standpipes with two and one-half inch (2 ½") outlets that complies with the code that was in effect when the building was constructed and that has been properly maintained as meeting the requirements of the section.

The other installation standards of Chapter 9 apply to new or added standpipes.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-14

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: June 10, 1987

SUBJECT: Policy- Permit tonnage limitations

CODE: Mechanical & Building Code

SECTION: 126.1 & 110.3

Limitations regarding tonnage, assigned by code, for State and local Class "B" contractor licenses will be considered to limit the licensee to repair and install equipment developing a total of not more than 25 tons, or using compressors driven by not more than 30 horsepower.

This shall not limit a Class "B" contractor from installation or repair of air conditioning systems serving a building which contains more than 25 tons of mechanical refrigeration provided that no single system is greater than 25 tons, and that no single permit is greater than 25 tons. Subsequently, multiple permits may be purchased for a single address or building to form an aggregate of the total tonnage in multiples of 25 tons or less.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-13

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 29, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Combustion air

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 702.1

As an alternate to the requirements of 1/2 of the required combustion air opening being located within the lower 12 inches, all combustion air openings in an enclosure may be located within the upper 12 inches of the enclosure, provided there is an unobstructed area equal to twice the required opening area extending to the firebox.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 12

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PUBLICATION: April 16, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Kitchen hoods

CODE: Mechanical

SECTION: 508.1

This section requires that a Type I or Type II hood and exhaust be furnished over all commercial type food heat processing equipment which produce comparable amounts of steam, smoke, grease or heat in food establishments.

This requirement shall not apply to domestic type cooking equipment located in daycare facilities, churches, employee lunch rooms or similar uses which are no more hazardous than kitchen facilities in an individual dwelling unit.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-11

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 16, 1987

SUBJECT: Policy- Minor addition

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3403

Minor structural additions may be made with the same material or method of construction of which the existing building was constructed provided that such building, including the new addition, does not exceed the area and height allowed by Table 5-B of the Building Code.

The determination of what constitutes a minor addition to the structure will be applied on each individual case. The reasoning and result of the determination shall be properly documented.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 10

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PUBLICATION: April 16, 1987

SUBJECT: Policy- Grease traps

CODE: Plumbing

SECTION: 1011.1

This section requires an approved type grease trap to be installed in the waste line leading from food establishments such as restaurants, cafes, lunch counters, cafeterias, bars, clubs, and hotel kitchens where large quantities of grease may be introduced into the drainage or sewage system.

This requirement shall not apply to day-care facilities, churches, employee lunch rooms and similar occupancies where domestic type cooking equipment is used.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-09

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: April 15, 1987

SUBJECT: Policy- Daycare toilet facilities

CODE: Building

SECTION: Appendix Chapter 29- Table Footnote

In order to be consistent with State requirements, the following procedure will be used for Daycare Facilities:

1. An affidavit by the owner must be submitted stating the requested number of occupants.
2. One toilet for every requested 17 children or portion thereof. Urinal may be counted but cannot exceed 50% of total number of toilets.
3. One lavatory for every 17 children or portion thereof.
4. The number of fixtures will be based on the requested occupant load.
5. The occupant load shall not exceed one person for each 30 square feet of usable space.
6. Separate male and female restrooms are not required.
7. The requested occupant load cannot exceed the occupant load assigned by wastewater.
8. The requested occupant load will be shown on the permit and occupancy certificate.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-08

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 24, 1987

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Awnings and entrance-type canopies

CODE: Building

SECTION: 3206 and 3208

Chapter 32 of the building code addresses permanent occupancy of public property and specifically allows awning and entrance-type canopies to be constructed with noncombustible frames and combustible coverings. This memorandum is to clarify that same allowance will be permitted for awnings and entrance-type canopies on private property used as follows:

1. Awning is a roof like structure supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building, designed to protect windows from the weather and not intended for habitation or occupancy purposes.
2. Entrance Type canopy is a roof like structure projecting from the exterior wall of a building, not exceeding twelve feet in width.

Permanent roof structures designed for protection of habitable or occupied areas must be constructed in accordance to the requirements of Chapters 15, 16 and Appendix Chapter 31, Division II of the Building Code. Temporary membrane structures erected for a period of less than 180 days shall comply with the Fire Code.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/sb



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 07

Page 1 of 2

PUBLICATION: January 16, 1987

SUBJECT: Policy- Address change procedure

CODE: Building

SECTION: 502

The following will establish the procedure where a change to any existing address is requested. This policy affects the address assignment to the property according to Chapter 10, Section 211-217 and Chapter 40, Section 40-16 of Code of Ordinances. Street names will be assigned according to Chapters 40 & 42 of the Code of Ordinances.

1. Property owner/agent must submit a written request to the Building Official which includes the following:
 - A. Existing Address
 - B. Proposed Address
 - C. Necessity of Address Change
 - D. Account and Meter numbers for each utility serving the property at the correct address
2. The permit section personnel will conduct an investigation of the request which will include a record search and field observation of existing properties with an addresses assigned. A written report of the records research and field observation will be provide to the Building Official for review along with the written request.

3. Approval/Disapproval by the Building Official:

A. If approved, the Permit Section personnel will notify the owner/agent of the approval and collect all necessary fees. The Permit Section personnel will forward “ Notice of Address Change” to all parties including:

U S Post Office
All utilities
Police Department
Fire Department
Harris County Appraisal District

B. If disapproved, the Permit Section personnel will notify the owner/agent of the status of the request for address change.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97- 06

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: December 23, 1986

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Corridor doors

CODE: Building

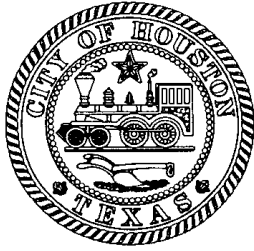
SECTION: 1004.3.4.3.2.1

Doors without the labels shall be considered as having a 20 minute fire rating if they are of 1 3/4-inch thick solid bonded wood construction.

Door frames milled from 1 1/2-inch wood or metal door frames will be considered as meeting the 20 minute requirement without being labeled.

Gary Bridges
Acting Building Official

GB/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-05

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: December 23, 1986

SUBJECT: Policy- Certificates of Occupancy or Compliance

CODE: Building

SECTION: 109

The purpose of this policy is to set guidelines for the transition of occupancy classification and types of construction from the previous code to the designations in the current code. For a point of clarification it would not make any difference what designations are shown on the certificates as long as the authority having jurisdiction knows what the designation means as to the use and construction types and also what code was in effect when the building was constructed. With this in mind the following procedures will be used in the future:

1. The current building code occupancy classification and type of construction will be shown on all occupancy or compliance certificates that are issued from occupancy inspection reports. The certificates will be coded as to which code was used in checking the building as follows:

97 Code- Buildings permitted after March 12, 2000

94 Code- Buildings permitted after January 26, 1997

91 Code- Buildings permitted after July 12, 1993

88 Code- Buildings permitted after March 25, 1990

85 Code- Buildings permitted after May 5, 1986

72 Code- Buildings permitted between June 1972 and May 5, 1986

63 Code- Buildings permitted between March 1963 and June 1972

U K Code- Buildings permitted before March 1963 and buildings
annexed into the City.

2. All certificates issued pursuant to a building permit application will have the same classification and type of construction as shown on the application and will be coded as above.

3. No certificate of Life Safety Code compliance will be issued unless the building complies with:

A. The building code that was in effect when the building was constructed.

B. Section 102 of the Building Code.

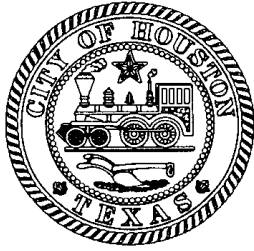
C. Appendix Chapter 34, Division I of the Building Code.

4. All buildings permitted before March 1963 and buildings annexed into the City will be checked for compliance with Section 102 and the Life Safety Appendix only.

5. Fees for inspections for a certificate of compliance shall be the same as for a certificate of occupancy.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-04

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: November 13, 1986

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Exiting through storerooms

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1004.2.2

This section allows an exit through one adjoining or intervening room but states that in other than dwelling units, exits shall not pass through kitchens, storerooms, restrooms, closets or spaces used for similar purposes.

It is our interpretation of this section that a warehouse would not be considered as a "storage room" if the warehouse portion is as large or larger than the area it serves and meets all other requirements of this chapter.

Melvin Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-03

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: July 22, 1985

SUBJECT: Interpretation- Special provisions for high-rise buildings

CODE: Building

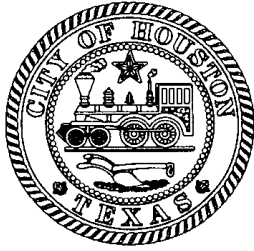
SECTION: 403.8.4

It is our interpretation that the intent of this Section is to provide fire protection of all emergency wiring, horizontally and vertically, continuously from the generator room to the equipment that it serves with the exception of branch circuits supplying current to exit signs, exit lighting, detectors, public address systems, fire alarm system, etc. In the future, the approved plans will reflect the method by which this protection will be provided.

These requirements will also apply to pneumatic tubing supplying control to fans and dampers for life safety systems.

Melvin Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-02

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: March 6, 1985

SUBJECT: Policy- Partial occupancy of buildings

CODE: Building

SECTION: 109

The Building Code requires a Certificate of Occupancy to be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises of all commercial buildings prior to occupancy. It also allows a Certificate of Occupancy to be issued for the use of a portion or portions of a building prior to the completion of the entire building or structure.

The policy relative to issuing partial Certificates of Occupancy is as follows:

1. The portion of the building where occupancy is requested must conform to the codes.
2. In fire-resistive buildings, the structural frame must be protected up to and including the floor of occupancy. If the ceiling membrane is part of the structural frame fire protection, then it must be installed throughout the floor of occupancy.
3. Where a standpipe system is required, the system must be in operation throughout the structure. If an automatic sprinkler system is required, it must be in operation throughout the areas to be occupied.
4. If the building falls within the scope of a high-rise building, all life safety requirements shall be in operation throughout the areas to be occupied.

The Certificate of Occupancy attests that the portion or portions for which the certificate is issued meets the codes, but not the total building, a separate certificate will be issued for each portion of the building upon completion of the space.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official
MLE/BB/lf



CITY OF HOUSTON

Building Inspection Division

CODE WORD 97

INTERPRETATIONS & APPLICATIONS OF THE UNIFORM CODES, '97 EDITION

CW NO: 97-01

Page 1 of 1

PUBLICATION: October 4, 1982

SUBJECT: Interpretation - Stairway finish material

CODE: Building

SECTION: 1006

The following interpretation is relative to requirements for finished materials used on stairways, treads and landings in Type I and II construction as stated in Sections 602.4 and 603.4 of the Building Code:

1. Concrete treads, risers and landing may be painted or finished with vinyl or asbestos tile.
2. Stairways not required to be enclosed may have treads, risers and landings finished as required for floor coverings.
3. An enclosed corridor on the ground floor leading from the stairway to the exterior of the building may be finished as required for corridors provided an approved fire rated door separates the stairway enclosure from the corridor.

Melvin L. Embry
Building Official

MLE/BB/lf